

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 IO-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-20 USIA-15 ACDA-19 AID-20 DPW-01 SR-02 ORM-03

DRC-01 /175 W

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R 100730Z NOV 73

FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1998

INFO AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

AMCONSUL KARACHI

AMCONSUL LAHORE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

USMISSION GENEVA

USMISSION USUN

C O N F I D E N T I A L ISLAMABAD 9754

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SREF, PFOR, PK, IN, BG

SUBJ: UNHCR ON EXCHANGES OF BENGALLEES, NON-BENGALLEES
AND POWS

SUMMARY. ACCORDING PRINCE SADRUDDIN, GOP HAS AGREED THAT
IT WILL NOT CHARGE AGAINST "HARDSHIP" CATEGORY OF NON-
BENGALLEES THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN FOUND INELIGIBLE UNDER FIRST
THREE CATEGORIES AFTER ARRIVAL IN PAKISTAN. GOP HAS ALSO
AGREED TO EXPEDITE VERIFICATION OF NON-BENGALLEE APPLICA-
TIONS UNDER FIRST THREE CATEGORIES. SADRUDDIN BELIEVES
THIS WILL RESOLVE
IMMEDIATE PROBLEM AND PERMIT SPEED-UP
IN REPATRIATION AND EXCHANGE PROCESS. END SUMMARY.

1. CHARGE, ACCOMPANIED BY POL COUNSELOR, CALLED ON
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PRINCE SADRUDDIN, UN HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES,

AFTERNOON NOVEMBER 9 IN RAWALPINDI. PRINCE WAS ON TWO-DAY STOPOVER IN PAKISTAN AFTER VISITING BANGLADESH.

2. SADRUDDIN COMMENTED THAT HE HAD FOUND BDG MORE RELAXED ABOUT PACE OF EXCHANGE THAN HE HAD ANTICIPATED, CERTAINLY LESS TENSE THAN THEY WERE DURING HIS PREVIOUS VISIT. BENGALLEES DID, HOWEVER, EXPRESS UNHAPPINESS OVER ALLEGED SLOW PACE AT WHICH GOP WAS ACCEPTING NON-BENGALLEES AND VOICED SUSPICION THAT PAKS WERE TRYING TO WELSH ON THEIR COMMITMENT UNDER DELHI ACCORDS. PRINCE UNDERSTOOD THAT BDG HAD, AS A RESULT THESE SUSPICIONS, PREVAILED ON RELUCTANT INDIANS TO SLOW UP RATE OF POW RETURN AS MEANS PRESSURING GOP.

3. SADRUDDIN SAID THAT HIS CONVERSATIONS WITH FOREIGN MINISTRY HERE HAD, HE BELIEVED, RESOLVED THIS PROBLEM. PRIMARY SOURCE OF DIFFICULTY HAD BEEN THAT PAKS, IN ORDER TO GET EXCHANGE STARTED, HAD INITIALLY GRANTED BLANKET CLEARANCE TO SOME THOUSANDS NON-BENGALLEES WHO CLAIMED TO BE IN ONE OF FIRST THREE CATEGORIES (FORMER CENTRAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES, DIVIDED FAMILIES AND FORMER WEST PAK DOMICILE). AFTER ARRIVAL THESE PEOPLE IN PAKISTAN, GOP HAD FOUND MANY OF THEM INELIGIBLE. BDG HAD ASSUMED GOP WOULD CHARGE THEM AGAINST THE 25,000 "HARDSHIP" CASES PAKS WERE OBLIGED TO RECEIVE. IN ORDER PREVENT GOA FROM FILLING UP "HARDSHIP" CATEGORY THROUGH USE OF REJECTS FROM FIRST THREE CATEGORIES, BDG HAD BEEN SLOWING UP RATE OF DEPARTURES NON-BENGALLEES FROM BANGLADESH.

4. IN HIS DISCUSSIONS WITH GOP, HOWEVER, SADRUDDIN HAD JUST BEEN INFORMED THAT GOP WOULD NOT CHARGE ANY OF THESE REJECTS AGAINST THE 25,000 EVEN THOUGH THEY HAD FAILED QUALIFY UNDER FIRST THREE CATEGORIES. SADRUDDIN SAW THIS CONCESSION AS EFFECTIVELY RESOLVING THIS PARTICULAR PROBLEM.

5. ACCORDING PRINCE, GOP HAD ALSO AGREED DO ITS BEST TO SPEED UP PROCESS OF VERIFYING APPLICATIONS UNDER FIRST THREE CATEGORIES, THEREBY OBIVIATING NEED FOR TRANSPORT-CONFIDENTIAL

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OING UNCLEARED CASES WHO MIGHT LATER BE FOUND INELIGIBLE.

6. DISCUSSING CURRENT AIR LIFT, SADRUDDIN COMMENTED THAT IT HAD ALWAYS BEEN UNDERSTOOD BY UNHCR THAT FACT TWICE AS MANY BENGALLEES WERE TO BE MOVED TO BANGLADESH AS NON-BENGALLEES TO PAKISTAN WOULD MEAN AIRCRAFT TRAVELING BANGLADESH-PAKISTAN ONLY PARTLY FULL. SOME OF DONOR COUNTRIES, HOWEVER, WERE SOMEWHAT CONCERNED WHEN AIRCRAFT

RETURNED FROM DACCA ALMOST EMPTY. FOR THIS REASON, SADRUDDIN CONTINUED, HE WAS ANXIOUS TO ACCELERATE MOVEMENT OF NON-BENGALEES TO GREATEST EXTENT POSSIBLE SO THAT AIRCRAFT WOULD BE MOST FULLY UTILIZED DURING EARLY PHASE OF AIR LIFT.

6. WITH REGARD "HARDSHIP" CATEGORIES OF NON-BENGALEES, PRINCE UNDERSTOOD THAT GOP HAD ASKED ICRC 10-12 DAYS AGO TO BEGIN PROCESS OF IDENTIFYING THEM BUT ICRC HAD NOT YET REPLIED. HE FORESAW SOME DIFFICULTY IN THIS OPERATION SINCE THERE WAS NO FIRM DEFINITION OF JUST WHAT CONSTITUTED "HARDSHIP" CASE. WHAT GOP HAD IN MIND, HE ADDED, WAS THAT BULK OF HARDSHIP CASES SHOULD BE DRAWN FROM THOSE IN BANGLADESH WHO HAD OPENLY SIDED WITH PAKISTAN DURING 1971, SUCH AS MEMBERS OF PEACE COMMITTEES, RAZAKARS, ETC.

7. AFTER SEEING CHARGE, SADRUDDIN HELD EVENING MEETING WITH REPRESENTATIVES VARIOUS FOREIGN MISSIONS IN ISLAMABAD. HE TOLD GROUP THAT UNHCR HAD OBTAINED ABOUT \$5.6 MILLION IN DONATIONS OF TOTAL \$14.3 MILLION THAT IT ESTIMATES AS COST OF EXCHANGE OPERATION. TOTAL PERSONS MOVED SO FAR CAME TO APPROXIMATELY 50,000, INCLUDING JUST OVER 30,000 BENGALEES, ABOUT 17,000 NON-BENGALEES FROM BANGLADESH, AND 6,000 ADDITIONAL FROM NEPAL. HE REPEATED HIS WISH THAT AIR LIFT BE AS FULLY UTILIZED AS POSSIBLE DURING EARLY MONTHS OF OPERATION. FOREIGN MINISTRY DIRGEN FOR SOUTH ASIA, ABDUL SATTAR, WAS ALSO PRESENT AT MEETING. SATTAR CONFIRMED HIS EARLIER STATEMENT TO US (REFTEL) THAT GOP HAD PLACED NO NUMERICAL LIMIT ON FIRST THREE CATEGORIES NON-BENGALEES. HE ADDED THAT GOP HAD CLEARED TOTAL OF MORE THAN 24,000 NON-BENGALEES BY END OCTOBER AND HAD SENT 5,000
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MORE CLEARANCES TO DACCA SINCE THEN. SOBER

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